

**Media Contact: Alec Bennetts | 0409 966 931 | [media@accan.org.au](mailto:media@accan.org.au)**

## Media Release

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### **Ban on unfair trading practices welcome**

Today's announcement from Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Assistant Treasurer Stephen Jones reflects consistent efforts from consumer advocates to improve shady practices employed by some businesses, and particularly digital platforms.

Unfair practices cost consumers more than just money – it costs them valuable time, reduces consumer confidence in markets and distort consumers' ability to make free choices. 'Unfair' trading practices fall into a category of conduct which can be harmful, subtly manipulative or exploitative, but don't reach a legal benchmark for unconscionable conduct – which is illegal. This reform will plug the gap between the law and community expectations.

ACCAN CEO Carol Bennett welcomed this move from the Prime Minister and urged the government to consider any reforms which result in better consumer outcomes.

"In recent years we have seen some examples of companies failing to treat consumers with the decency and respect they deserve. In more serious cases, consumers have been exploited or manipulated. It is for that reason that unfair practices must be explicitly outlawed in legislation and investigated and sanctioned when they occur."

"Conduct which would be made illegal under this reform includes subscription trapping, deceptive website design, the use of fake time-pressure tactics or drip-pricing."

"Strengthening protections by including unfair trading provisions within the Australian Consumer Law is the best course of action to prevent this conduct and protect consumers."

"For these reasons ACCAN and other consumer representatives have advocated for unfair trading prohibitions over recent years. We have also suggested that adequate funding be allocated for consumer representation in the discussion about protections and safeguards in the digital platforms space."

"We look forward to participating in the important consultation which will shape the final design of these laws," Ms Bennett concluded.

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***The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia's peak communication consumer organisation. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.***

***ACCAN is committed to reconciliation that acknowledges Australia's past and values the unique culture and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. [Read our RAP](#)***

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